

REMARKS

This amendment responds to the Office Action dated July 28, 2004.

The Examiner objected to the Abstract of the Disclosure, contending that it failed to describe the merits of the invention. The specification has been amended to provide a replacement Abstract.

The Examiner objected to claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being not enabled by the specification. Claim 2 has been canceled.

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Zirngibl, U.S. Patent No. 6,487,547. The Examiner rejected claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of the same cited reference. The cited reference generally discloses a voice-responsive telephone interface in which a user may access and navigate through a database. Though the cited reference permits aural signals to serve as both inputs from the user and outputs to the user, the navigational system disclosed by this cited prior art is of the type disclosed in applicant's Background of the Invention which is both confusing to a user and requires a high level of concentration by the user because the aural signals to the user are too representative of the data being accessed.

New independent claim 11 includes the limitations of (1) a first input for navigating upward through said hierarchical structure, (2) a second input for navigating downward through said hierarchical structure, (3) a first aural signal associated with said first input having a first characteristic indicating to a user upward navigation through said hierarchical structure, said first characteristic independent of the set of data from which upward navigation commences, and (4) a second aural signal associated with said second input having a second characteristic indicating to a user downward navigation through said hierarchical structure, said second characteristic independent of the set of data from which downward navigation commences. The cited reference does not disclose these limitations. To the contrary, in the system of the cited reference, each aural signal provided to the user is associated with the data or set of data selected, and does not indicate to the user navigation through a hierarchy. A user of the system of the disclosed

reference, for example, upon selection of a set of data will not know whether navigation is occurring through a hierarchy of such data or from a previous level of data.

Dependent claims 12-20 depend from independent claim 11 and are distinguished over the cited reference for the same reasons as is independent claim 11.

Independent claim 21 includes the limitations of a (1) first input for navigating from a current level to a sublevel of said current level, (2) a second input for navigating from a current sublevel of a level to said level, (3) a first aural signal associated with said first input having a first characteristic indicating to a user navigation from a current level to a sublevel of said current level, said first characteristic independent of the level from which said navigation commences, and (4) a second aural signal associated with said second input having a second characteristic indicating to said user navigation from a current sublevel of a level to said level, said second characteristic independent of the sublevel from which said navigation commences. The cited reference does not disclose these limitations. To the contrary, in the system of the cited reference, each aural signal provided to the user is associated with the data or set of data selected, and does not indicate to the user navigation between levels of data. A user of the system of the disclosed reference, for example, upon selection of a set of data will not know whether navigation is occurring through a hierarchy of data or from a different level of data.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of new claims 11-30.

Respectfully submitted,



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Appl. No. 10,627,345
Amdt. dated December 28, 2004
Reply to Office action of July 28, 2004

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PATENT & TRADEMARKS
I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Dated: December 28, 2004



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